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6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planning processes were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and Department of Interior (DOI) and BLM policies and regulations. NEPA and the associated regulatory/policy framework require that Federal agencies involve interested publics in their decision-making, consider a range of reasonable alternatives to proposed actions, and prepare environmental documents that disclose the potential impacts of proposed actions and alternatives.

Title II, Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) directs BLM to coordinate planning efforts with American Indian Tribes, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments as part of its land use planning process.

This chapter documents the collaborative approach undertaken by BLM throughout the process of developing and releasing the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA). In developing the NCA RMP, BLM sought to do more than provide information and solicit feedback. BLM implemented a process that enabled stakeholders to participate at the level and to the degree that best met their needs and interests. Those interested in obtaining updates had the opportunity to do so via newsletters and open houses; while those interested in developing products and engaging in discussion and issue resolution had that opportunity as well. The distinction between public involvement, which requires information sharing and feedback, and collaboration, which generates engagement in product development, is instrumental in understanding and appreciating BLM's approach.

6.2 COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PROCESS

In seeking to implement a collaborative approach to developing this RMP, the BLM sought assistance from the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (Institute). The Institute provides professional neutral process expertise designed to “assist parties in resolving environmental conflicts ... that involve Federal agencies or interests.” Specifically, its primary objectives are to:

“Resolve Federal environmental, natural resources, and public lands disputes in a timely and constructive manner through assisted negotiation and mediation, increase the appropriate use of environmental conflict resolution (ECR) in general and improve the ability of Federal agencies and other interested parties to engage in ECR effectively, and engage in and promote collaborative problem-solving and consensus-building during the design and implementation of Federal environmental policies to prevent and reduce the incidence of future environmental disputes.”

After publishing the Notice of Intent (NOI) on August 7, 2001, BLM entered into an inter-agency agreement with the Institute in November 2001 to design and implement a process that would address stakeholder polarization

The purposes of this partnership were to: (1) assess opportunities for collaboration in the development of the RMP (2) develop a collaborative approach and strategies based on the results of the assessment, and (3) provide neutral facilitation resources.

In June 2002, the assessment report, entitled *Assessing Prospects for Collaborative Planning and Public Participation for the Bruneau and Snake River Birds of Prey NCA Resource Management Plans*, was completed and made available to the public. The Assessment included a comprehensive interview process of numerous individuals with interests in and ties to the planning area.



The Assessment became the foundation for a document that outlined the rationale and approach for BLM’s planning process: *A Collaborative Process for Resource Management Planning* (Collaborative Plan). Based on Assessment results, the Collaborative Plan identified the following seven key principles to guide the process and all related activities throughout the project:

1. Realistically match internal resources to commitments;
2. Identify what is fixed and what is open for input and influence by the public;
3. Be clear and consistent;
4. Educate about the RMP process and how it links to future site-specific decisions;
5. Link to national strategies and policies (and court precedents) in order to focus on what is open for discussion and minimize debate on issues that are already decided;
6. Follow through on commitments, both procedural and substantive; and
7. Be publicly accountable for seeking input from the public.

The Collaborative Plan articulated the process goal: “To make better decisions with a greater base of public understanding, support and ownership.” To accomplish this goal, the Collaborative Plan identified six process objectives:

1. To learn as much as possible from stakeholders to improve BLM decisions. Use stakeholders to help create a good information base.
2. To understand the agency’s roles and responsibilities, and what is and isn’t negotiable (laws, regulations, requirements, previous decisions, etc.).
3. To engage stakeholders in product development (e.g., issue identification, issue bundling, alternatives development, review of draft EIS).
4. To provide a variety of involvement opportunities that enable stakeholders to en-

gage at the level that best suits their level of interest.

5. To provide the public an accounting of how their input is used.
6. To seek as much consensus and common ground as possible.

6.3 STRUCTURED CHECKPOINTS

The collaborative process resulting from this guidance used “structured checkpoints” so stakeholders knew who would have input to product development and at what stage in the process. Using this iterative process of structured checkpoints, draft products were developed; then, those products were circulated through the structured checkpoints for refinement and feedback as appropriate.

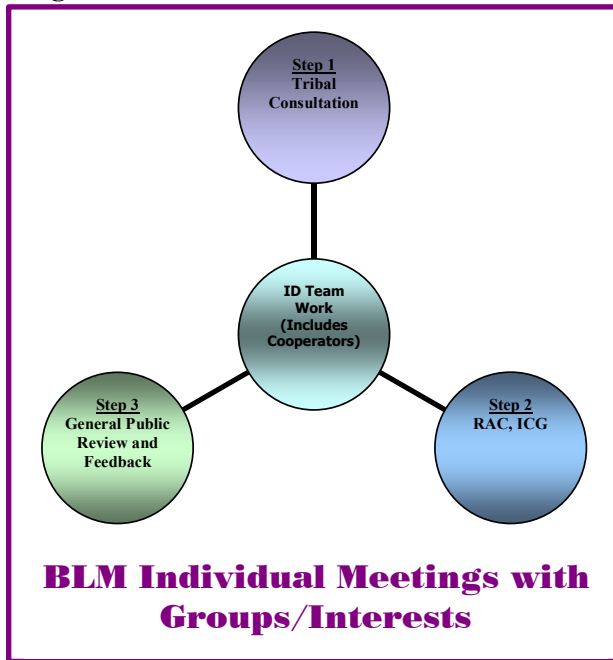
6.3.1 Interdisciplinary Team

The structured checkpoint process was iterative in nature. Products circulated through each checkpoint were resubmitted to the BLM’s Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) – a team of resource experts responsible for the development of those components of the planning area that fall within their expertise and purview within the agency. Typically, the ID Team accepted all of the input and suggestions generated through the various checkpoints and considered, addressed and refined the product(s) as appropriate. In a number of instances, specific collaborative events were convened that provided stakeholders and the public an opportunity to work with and interact directly with the ID Team.

The following diagram illustrates the iterative nature of the process and the integration of structured checkpoint activities into the ID Team’s development of products. This iterative activity was the foundation of the collaborative process. To inform the ID Team work, the structured checkpoints worked in a variety of manners as described in Section 6.2.1 through Section 6.3.4.



Figure 6.1. The Collaborative Process.



6.3.2 Tribal Consultation

In keeping with Tribal preferences, applicable laws, and regulations and policies, regular opportunities were provided for interaction with Tribal officials. From a regulatory standpoint, the BLM must use the consultation process to “identify the cultural values, the religious beliefs, the traditional practices, and the legal rights of Native American People which could be affected by BLM actions on Federal lands.”

At the outset of this planning process, meetings were held with the Shoshone Bannock and the Shoshone Paiute Tribes to determine consultation procedures, format, and key junctures.

In March 2001, the BLM Boise District entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, formalizing the consultation process through an existing venue. The *Wings and Roots* Native American Campfire is a program initiated by the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes and the Boise District several years ago to supplement their government-to-government relationship. In addition to the regular monthly consultation, special ad-hoc

meetings were held to discuss issues related to the Draft RMP/EIS.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe chose to be involved on both a government-to-government and staff basis. Shoshone-Bannock Tribal staff participated in a workshop with BLM personnel. The Tribe provided an orientation on the Tribal perspective and together the group identified appropriate methods for addressing Tribal issues. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Council also invites the BLM to provide information in a formal manner at its Council meetings. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe and the BLM work to maintain the coordination at both levels.

All Tribal consultation and input occurred through direct interaction between BLM staff and Tribal representatives. The BLM’s Interdisciplinary Team incorporated Tribal perspectives into products under development.

6.3.3 Other Formal Consultation

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended, directs Federal agencies to ensure that actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the existence of any listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat (50 CFR 400). The ESA authorizes Federal agencies to enter into early consultation with the USF&WS to make those determinations. BLM entered into an agreement with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) on April 17, 2002 and periodic meetings have taken place throughout the planning process. In addition, USF&WS staff has attended Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG) meetings, providing comment and feedback at key junctures.

State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The SHPO must be consulted concerning any resource management proposals that might affect a cultural property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Consultation with the SHPO is a normal part of the planning process.

6.3.4 Coordination with Organized Entities (RAC, ICG, Cooperating Agencies) Resource Advisory Council (RAC)

The Boise District RAC is a fifteen-member Federal Advisory Committee Act-chartered group responsible for providing consensus-based advice to BLM. The RAC received briefings and were afforded opportunities to comment on product and process at their regularly scheduled meetings. The RAC has been actively involved with product development, hosting public meetings, participating in workshops where the group worked to address input, developing alternatives, and providing a unique perspective relative to other collaborative processes. A RAC sub-committee was formed in 2001 to assist with this process.

Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG)

NEPA requires the BLM to work toward consistency between management plans and the “officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, policies and programs of other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and American Indian Tribes.”

Relative to the above requirement, the ICG is a process innovation. Convened by the BLM, this group is comprised of representatives from State and Federal agencies, counties and congressional staffs who meet periodically to review plan development and issues, provide for consistency review from their respective agency perspectives, and help resolve inter-agency issues that may be in conflict, not only with BLM but among participating entities. The ICG met numerous times over the course of this planning process, and while some participated at a greater degree than others, many participants became actively involved by:

- Providing for consistency review of the BLM product with their own plans, and seeking understanding and addressing consistency issues between their own and other participants plans;

- Providing their resource-specific expertise to similar elements and issues of the BLM product;
- Attending and interacting with individuals at public meetings on issues related to their areas of expertise;
- Participating in workshops to develop planning products; and
- Reviewing and commenting on the document.

ICG Representation:

- Ada County Parks and Waterways
- Ada County Planning and Zoning
- Canyon County Commissioners
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
- Elmore County Commissioners
- Governor’s Office
- Idaho Army National Guard
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Lands
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
- Idaho Department of Water Resources
- Idaho Soil Conservation Commission
- Idaho Department of Agriculture
- Mountain Home Air Force Base
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Office of Species Conservation
- Owyhee County
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

This draft will be made available to the Governor of Idaho, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and American Indian Tribes for formal comment. The resulting comments will be addressed in the final version of the proposed plan. The formal 60-day consistency review by the Governor will occur after the final plan is published.

Cooperating Agencies

Cooperating Agency status was offered to the Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG) and County officials from Ada, Canyon, Elmore and Owyhee Counties. These agencies have jurisdiction overlapping BLM’s, offer special expertise, and their involvement enhances coordination and consistency. Agencies partici-



pated in different ways and in varying amounts according to their desires and interests. The IDARNG and Owyhee County signed formal cooperating agency agreements and their representatives participated on a regular basis as members of the Interdisciplinary (ID) planning team. The two entities also participated in the ICG.

6.3.5 General Public and Other Collaborative Activities

The project *Assessment* advised the BLM that different people and stakeholders will prefer different levels of involvement, and that multiple types of opportunities ought to be available so that individuals and entities can participate at the level that best suits them. Therefore, opportunities for involvement were designed to range from simple information sharing and feedback to involvement in product development. The venues were selected to meet specific stakeholder needs and their desired level of involvement in the process.

The participation and engagement of special interests groups, landowners, and the general public and all stakeholders was solicited throughout the process. A variety of venues for participation were made available, including public open houses, community meetings, a data fair, and focused large and small group work sessions.

One of the notable events of the collaborative process was the assemblage of the RAC, ICG, and the ID Team to assimilate information collected during the scoping meetings and use that information, in combination with the desired future condition statements, to initiate the process of drafting a range of alternatives. The public was invited to observe the meeting and was afforded opportunity to make comments and provide suggestions.

Personal contacts, news releases, newsletters, e-mail notices, the BLM planning website, and Federal Register notices were the primary tools used to communicate with stakeholders and collaborators. Upon request, BLM pro-

vided presentations and had informal discussions relative to specific issues of concern.

Throughout the collaborative process, processes and products were built based upon those that came before. As a result, the alternatives described in the Draft RMP/EIS were designed to achieve the desired future conditions, which were developed in consideration of the issue statements, all of which was completed within the framework of the planning criteria.

6.4 COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT

Important components of the collaborative process were the periodic assessment activities conducted by the neutral facilitators to assess stakeholder perspectives of the process and products to date. Based on this information, facilitators would make their own process adjustments, and would also provide recommendations for appropriate adjustments to BLM. While much of this was conducted through informal conversations, structured assessments were conducted and documented (without attributing comments to specific individuals) in January 2003 and March 2005.

6.5 FUTURE COLLABORATION

The collaborative process will continue through the completion of the NCA RMP and will be based on existing understandings, processes, and structured checkpoints.

- Public notifications will be made via newsletter announcements, media releases, web postings, and key contacts with stakeholders prior to the distribution of the DEIS. Such communications will continue throughout the release of the ROD.
- Community meetings, anticipated to include field trips focused on key issues and areas, followed by public meetings, will be held to clarify information and provide for more informed comments. This will occur following the distribution of the DEIS and during the comment period.



- Formal consultation, with Tribes, USFWS, and SHPO will occur throughout the duration of the RMP process.
- Ongoing coordination with local governments and special interests will occur through the comment period and comment analysis via the ICG forum and other venues as appropriate.
- At the conclusion of the formal comment period, a third party contractor will complete a detailed comment analysis. BLM will forward the results of the comment analysis to the RAC, ICG and cooperating agencies. A workshop will then be convened to determine the appropriate response to the comments, including any additions or modifications to the alternatives.
- After proposed changes to the analysis and/or alternatives have been reviewed by the RAC, ICG, cooperating agencies and Tribes, public meetings will be held to solicit feedback on the proposed changes.
- Formal mediation services will be available if needed.
- The Final RMP/EIS will respond where appropriate to all substantive written comments received during the comment period, and will incorporate changes resulting from the collaborative revision process. The Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued by BLM after the release of the Final RMP/EIS, the Governor's Consistency Review, and resolution of any protests to the Final RMP/EIS.

6.6 LIST OF RECIPIENTS

The following is a partial list of the agencies, organizations, and individuals who expressed interest in the Draft RMP/EIS during the preparation of this document. Each of these groups or individuals will be sent a notice of availability and, upon request, either the summary of the Draft RMP/EIS, the entire document, or notification of where the document may be viewed on the BLM planning website.

6.6.1 American Indian Tribes

- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
- Shoshone-Paiute Tribes

6.6.2 Government Agencies and Representatives

- Ada County Commissioners
- Ada County Planning and Zoning
- Boise City Public Works
- Canyon County Commissioners
- Canyon County Planning and Zoning
- Department of Agriculture – Boise and Payette National Forests
- Department of Defense – Washington, DC
- Department of Defense – Mountain Home Air Force Base
- Department of Defense – U. S. Army Corp of Engineers
- Department of Energy – Washington, DC
- Department of Interior
- Department of Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs – Idaho and Nevada
- Department of Interior – National Park Service
- Department of Interior – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Elmore County Commissioners
- Elmore County Growth & Development
- Elmore County Planning and Zoning
- Idaho Air National Guard
- Idaho Army National Guard
- Idaho Department of Agriculture
- Idaho Department of Commerce
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
- Idaho Department of Lands
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
- Idaho Department of Water Resources
- Idaho Environmental Council
- Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
- Idaho Fish and Game Commission
- Idaho Geological Survey
- Idaho Migrant Council
- Idaho State Historical Society
- Office of the Governor
- Owyhee County Commissioners



- Owyhee County Natural Resources
- Owyhee County Planning and Zoning
- State Historic Preservation Office
- State of Idaho Elected Officials – Local Area
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Senator Larry Craig
- U.S. Senator Butch Otter
- U.S. Representative Mike Simpson

6.6.3 Business Organizations and Other Groups

In addition to the specific businesses, interest groups, and other organizations listed below, numerous individuals expressed an interest in the Draft RMP/EIS and requested to be notified of the availability of the Draft RMP/EIS.

- American Endurance Riders
- American Hiking Society
- Association of Idaho Cities
- Audubon Society
- Blue Ribbon Coalition
- Bogus Creek Outfitters
- Boise District Grazing Board
- Boise District Resource Advisory Council
- Boise State University
- Boise Valley Point Dog Club
- Capital Trail Vehicle Assn
- Chamber of Commerce – Local Communities
- Committee for Idaho's High Desert
- Desert Bighorn Sheep Council
- Desert Raiders
- Desert Rats of Idaho, Inc
- Elmore County Motorcycle Club
- American Ecology (Envirosafe)
- Far & Away Adventures
- Foundation for N American Sheep
- Foundation for N American Wild Sheep
- Friends of the Mustangs
- Friends of the West
- Gem/Boise Economic Development
- German Shorthaired Pointer Club
- Heritage Program
- High Desert Coalition
- Idaho Association of Counties
- Idaho ATV Association
- Idaho Bird Hunters Association
- Idaho Brittany Club
- Idaho Capital Trail Association
- Idaho Cattle Association
- Idaho Conservation League
- Idaho Ducks Unlimited
- Idaho Gem Club
- Idaho Gold Prospectors Assoc
- Idaho Native Plants Society
- Idaho Outfitter and Guides Association
- Idaho Power Co
- Idaho Rangeland Resources Committee
- Idaho Rivers United
- Idaho Rural Partnership
- Idaho Soil Conservation Commission
- Idaho Snowmobile Association
- Idaho Trail Machine Association
- Idaho Water Users Association
- ID Whitewater Association
- Idaho Watershed Project (Western Watershed Project)
- Idaho Wildlife Council
- Idaho Wildlife Federation
- Idaho Wool Growers
- Ilowans Children
- Institute for High Desert Studies
- International Society for the Protection of Horses & Burros
- Juniper Mountain Outfitters
- Libraries – Local Public and University
- Little Gem Motorcycle Club
- Mile High Outfitters
- Nampa Gold Prospectors Assn
- National Wildlife Federation
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Owyhee Back Country Horsemen
- Owyhee Cattlemen's Assn
- Owyhee County Historical Complex
- Owyhee Gem & Mineral Society
- Owyhee Land Use Planning Commission
- Peregrine Fund World Center BOP
- Resolution Advocates
- River Odyssey's West
- Sevey Guide Service
- Sierra Club of Idaho
- Snake River Alliance
- Snake River Outfitters
- Snake River Raptor Volunteers



- Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife
- Squaw Butte Backcountry Horsemen
- Stanley Potts Outfitters
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wilderness Society of Idaho
- Treasure Valley Trail Machine Assn
- Trout Unlimited
- Western Range Service
- Western Whitewater Assn
- Whiskey Mountain Outfitters
- White Cloud Outfitters
- White Horse Associates
- Wild Rockies Inc
- Wilderness River Outfitters
- Wildlife Management Institute
- Woolgrowers Association of Idaho

6.7 KEY COLLABORATIVE EVENTS FOR NCA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table 6.1. Key Collaborative Events.

Topic (# of Meetings)	Audience	When
Scoping (6) and stakeholder comment	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	Nov 2001 – Jan 2002
Collaborative Process/ Issue Development (4)	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	July 2002
Review and comment on issues	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	July – August 2002
Issue Refinement (1)	Interdisciplinary Planning Team/RAC/ICG with public observation and input	September 2002
Review and comment on Planning Criteria	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	Fall 2002
Desired Future Conditions (3)	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	December 2002
Data Fair (3)	All stakeholders	June 2003
Objectives and Management Actions (5)	ID Team/RAC/ICG with public observation and input (Tribes through formal consultation)	Sept – Nov 2003
Preliminary Draft Alternatives (3)	All stakeholders (Tribes through formal consultation)	June – July 2004
Draft Alternatives (3) – Traveling Coffee Shops – Alternatives, Questions and Answers and How Comments were Incorporated	All stakeholders/RAC/ICG (Tribes through formal consultation)	June – July 2005



6.8 LIST OF PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA

Local and regional newspapers and radio stations throughout the planning area were used to disseminate information on the NCA

RMP/EIS scoping and planning process. Press releases were provided to the following print and broadcast media.

Table 6.2. List of Print and Broadcast Media Used to Disseminate Information.

Newspapers	
Idaho Statesman – Boise	Times News – Twin Falls
Owyhee Avalanche – Homedale	Kuna-Melba News – Kuna
Boise Weekly – Boise	Capital Press – LaGrande, OR
Messenger Index – Emmett	Mountain Home News – Mountain Home
Idaho Press Tribune – Nampa	Weiser Signal American – Weiser
KBCI Channel 2 – Boise	KTVB Channel 7 – Boise
KTRV Channel 12 – Nampa	KIVI Channel 6 – Meridian
KAID Channel 4 –PBS	
Radio	
KBOI-AM-670 – Boise	KBSU-AM-730 (NPR) – Boise
KGEM-AM-1140 – Boise	KIZN-FM-92 Country – Boise
KTSY-FM-89.5 – Caldwell	KQFC-FM-98 Country – Boise

A series of newsletters and project specific flyers were mailed to approximately 600 individuals, organizations, agencies, American Indian Tribes and elected officials.

- November 2001 (Newsletter on RMP process and scoping meeting schedule).
- March 2002 (Newsletter on scoping comments and call for Special Designations).
- August 2002 (Newsletter on Issue Development).
- November 2002 (Newsletter on Planning Criteria, Desired Future Conditions and meetings).
- March 2003 (Newsletter on Public Involvement, Desired Future Conditions and Alternatives).
- August 2003 (Newsletter on Alternative Development and public meetings).
- June 2004 (Newsletter on Preliminary Alternatives, Route Designations and public meeting schedule and process).
- August 2004 (RMP Update on Preliminary Draft Alternatives).
- December 2004 (RMP Update on schedule and staffing changes).
- June 2005 (Newsletter on Route Designations, Mid-Course Assessment, Proposed Alternatives and schedule for Traveling Coffee Shops).
- December 2005 (Newsletter on the RMP Process and an Outline of the Four Alternatives).



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